

**LIBER XXI
KHING KANG KING
THE CLASSIC OF PURITY**

**First written down by me
KO YUEN
(LAO-TZU)**

in the Episode of the Dynasty of Wu
and now made into a Rime by me

ALEISTER CROWLEY

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I

LAO KUN THE MASTER SAID:
TAO IS DEVOID OF FORM -
YET HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE BROUGHT TO BIRTH,
AND NURTURED BY ITS NORM.

TAO HATH NO WILL TO WORK;
YET BY ITS WAY OF HEAVEN
THE MOON AND SUN REJOICE TO RUN
AMONG THE STARRY SEVEN.

TAO HATH NO NAME; ITS WORD
IS GROWTH, AND SUSTENANCE
TO ALL; I AIM TO GIVE IT NAME:
TAO (HEAVEN PROSPER CHANCE!)

TAO HATH TWIN PHASE WITH TEH:
THE SILENT AND THE STRESSED.
OF MOTION, THOSE; OF THESE, REPOSE
SUBLIMELY MANIFEST

HEAVEN MOVES, PURE SILENCE HE;
EARTH RESTS BENEATH THE STRAIN;
SHUTTLE AND LOOM, AS WORD AND WOMB,
THEIR MYSTERY SUSTAIN

PURE MOTION MAKETH REST
AS SILENCE MAKETH STRESS.
IF MAN WERE STILL, THEN HEAVEN SHOULD THRILL
WITH EARTH TO NOTHINGNESS.

SELF LOVETH SILENCE. YEA,
BUT MIND DISTRACTETH IT.

MIND LOVETH REST; BUT PASSION'S PEST
ALLURES THE TREMBLING WIT.

IF MAN RESTRAIN DESIRE,
HIS MIND WILL CEASE TO ROLL,
AND MIND'S RELEASE ALLOW PURE PEACE
OF SILENCE TO THE SOUL.

THE SENSES WILL NOT SOIL;
THE THOUGHT WILL NOT UPSTRESS;
NOR POISONS (GREED, WRATH, DULNESS) BREED
THEIR TRIFORM DEADLINESS.

MEN EARN NOT EASE OF TAO
FOR THEIR DESIRE'S DISEASE;
BECAUSE THEIR MIND IS NOT REFINED
OF THOUGHT BY KILLING THESE.

IF ONE SHOULD SLAY DESIRES,
HIS MIND AND BODY SEEM
NO LONGER HIS, BUT PHANTASIES
DANCED IN A WANTON'S DREAM.

SLAY MIND, SLAY BODY, SLAY
THE EXTERNAL: MATTER GOES.
THEN SPACE REMAINS; RENEW THY PAINS!
UP! FRONT THE FINAL FOES!

II

LAO KUN THE MASTER SAID:
THE ADEPT IN SKILL OF SOUL
HATH NEVER AN AIM: THE BUNGLERS SHAME
IS THAT HE GROPE A GOAL.

WHO MOST POSSESS THE TEH
CONCEAL THEIR MAGICK POWER;
WHO LEAST POSSESS EXERT THEIR STRENGTH
SEVEN TIMES IN EVERY HOUR.

THESE, WHO CLING FAST TO POWERS,
WHO GUARD THEM, AND DISPLAY
THEIR MAGICK ART - THEY ARE NOT PART
OF TAO NOR YET OF TEH.

MEN WIN NOT TRUTH OF TAO
BECAUSE THEIR MINDS ARE WRIED.
THE MIND UNCURBED, THE SELF'S PERTURBED,
AND LOSES TUNE OF TIDE.

LOST, THE EXTERNAL LURES;
THEY TURN TO SEEK IT: THEN

ALL THINGS PERPLEX, CONFUSE, AND VEX
THOSE MISERABLE MEN.

DISORDERED THOUGHTS ARISE;
BODY AND MIND GROW SICK.
DISGRACE AND FEAR GROW YEAR BY YEAR
TO THEIR CLIMACTERIC.

WILD, THEY ARE TOSSED ABOUT
THROUGH LIFE AND DEATH; THEY QUIVER,
SUNK IN SEA-STRESS OF BITTERNESS,
AND LOSE THE TAO FOR EVER.

THE TRUE, THE ABIDING TAO!
WHO UNDERSTANDETH HATH;
WHO HATH THE TAO IS HERE AND NOW
IN SILENCE OF THE PATH

SLAY SPACE; THEN NAUGHT ABIDES.
HOLD NOT THY HOLY HAND!
WHEN NAUGHT GIVES BACK BEFORE THE ATTACK,
SERENE THY SILENCE STAND!

ALL'S REST, DEVOID OF MARK;
HOW SHOULD DESIRES FIX TOOTH?
WHEN THEY ARE PAST, THOU SURELY HAST
THE SILENCE OF THE TRUTH.

FLAWLESS THAT TRUTH AND FIXED,
YET APT TO EACH APPEAL
NATURE AND SENSE TO INFLUENCE -
THE MAGNET TO THE STEEL!

OH! THIS TRUE TOUCH WITH ALL
ELASTIC AND EXACT
THAT YET ABOVE THEIR TIDES -
THE SILENCE FREE FROM ACT!

HE THAT HATH THIS SHALL COME
LITTLE BY LITTLE, A BREATH,
SO FLOWETH HE NOW, TO TRUTH OF TAO,
WHEREIN HE VANISHETH.

MEN STYLE HIM LORD OF TAO,
YET HE HATH NONE TO LORD.
HID MOTIVE HE OF ALL THAT BE:
ENOUGH FOR HIS REWARD!

HE THAT CAN COMPREHEND
THIS DOCTRINE MAY TRANSMIT
THIS SACRED TAO TO MEN THAT VOW
THEMSELVES TO FATHOM IT.